

Residential

Last Updated Wednesday, 24 May 2006

Stay warm this winter,
while saving on your energy bills.

Saving energy is easy

In the face of higher energy bills this winter, the city of Boulder and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) encourages everyone to take action in their home to be more energy efficient.

EPA recommends five places to look for savings:

- sealing and insulating;
heating efficiently;
- changing lights;
- powering down home electronics; and
- looking for the Energy Star on new products.

Look in the Resources section for more information.
Free & Low Cost Tips for Saving Energy and Money!

- Replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs
- Look for the ENERGY STAR® label when buying new home products
- Caulk and weatherstrip gaps in doors and windows
- Set back your thermostat when you're asleep or away. When used properly, an Energy Star qualified programmable thermostat with four-temperature and time settings can save you \$100 each year on energy costs.
- Turn down the temperature on the water heater to 120 degrees or the medium setting
- Take advantage of natural daylight to avoid using lights during the day
- Change the filter on your furnace and follow maintenance guidelines
- Turn off computers, appliances and lights when not in use
- Install low flow devices on faucets and showers
- Keep blinds and curtains open during the day in the winter and closed at night to take advantage of sun's warmth

The following is a list of actions that you (homeowners and renters alike) can do to reduce your energy and greenhouse gas footprint. Click [here](#) to download a detailed actions checklist (197.00 KB) which helps quantify the GHG reduction potential for an average Boulder household.

Sign up for wind power. Currently, our electricity comes almost entirely from coal. By signing up for wind, households can reduce their emissions by 30-50% (as much as 4 to 10 tons of carbon dioxide reduced every year). The cost is sometimes as low as \$5.00/month, depending on how much electricity you use.

Make your home an efficient green building. Make your house healthier, more comfortable, and more efficient. Switch to CFL light bulbs; improve insulation; upgrade to ENERGYSTAR® appliances and windows. Or ask a contractor about the whole-house energy retrofit approach. Reduce emissions (and utility bills!) from 0 – 50%!

The City of Boulder's Dept of Water Conservation offers \$75 rebates on new energy efficient (and water efficient) clothes washers (toilets too!).

Visit www.bouldersaveswater.net to download the application and find out which models qualify.

Also, Xcel Energy is now offering rebates for general residential and evaporative coolers. Follow the links to Xcel's website to learn more.

Get out of your car, and reduce the miles you drive. Your car emits more carbon than your house – which isn't surprising given that the average American drives enough miles to go around the world once a year. Bike, walk, take the bus, or carpool and reduce your household emissions by up to 60%. Visit the Go Boulder website to learn more.

Get a more fuel efficient vehicle. When you buy your next vehicle, go for a hybrid, or simply one with a high fuel efficiency rating (plenty of new and used conventional cars get better than 30 mpg). Or convert your diesel vehicle to run on biodiesel.

The Federal Government offers incentives for the purchase of a new hybrid. [Click here](#) to learn more.

Install solar power and solar hot water on your house. Whether on-grid or off, few things have more local benefits than distributed solar energy. It's still a relatively big ticket item (although less than a new car), but better technology and lower costs make this a more and more attractive option.

Be a community leader. Organize your neighbors, religious congregations, home owners associations, schools, etc. to take action against climate change. Contact the City's Office of Environmental Affairs for ideas, support, and materials.

By the way, did you know that the City of Boulder ...

- Set an ambitious community greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal – and is part of a growing movement around the country to address global warming on a local level (162 U.S. Mayors have signed on in support);
- Requires all new City buildings (and major City remodeling projects) to be GREEN buildings (like the N. Boulder Rec Ctr), and has one of the most progressive mandatory residential green building programs in the country (Green Points);
- Has the highest levels of wind power purchasing in Colorado in both commercial and residential sectors; Boulder accounts for 19% of all residential and 56% all of commercial Windsource subscribers in Colorado.
- Has one of the best public transportation systems for a city of its size anywhere in the world;
- Is vulnerable to the predicted effects of climate change (via drought, reduced snowfall, and altering of alpine habitat).

Boulder , CO
Greenhouse Gas Emissions
Facts and Figures

Boulder's Annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Metric Tons

lbs

Total Citywide Emissions in 2004 (comprised of Commercial, Industrial, Residential, Transportation Sectors, & CU):

1.8 Million

4 Billion

Average CO 2 per person:

17

38,000

Average Residential Sector CO 2 per household (emissions from houses & apartments)**:

7

16,000

Average Transportation Sector CO 2 per household (the average household uses 1.85 cars):

14

30,000

CO 2 from a 22 mpg vehicle that drives 15,000 miles/yr:

6

13,000

Per-household average CO 2 emissions from a house & 1.85 cars (this is the share the each household has control over):

21

46,000

Household Reductions Required to
Meet Each Suggested Goal*

Metric Tons

lbs

- 17% Reduction in GHG emissions (Mirror the City's goal)

3.6

8,000

- 50% Reduction (Halve your emissions)

10.5

23,000

- 100% Reduction (Go Carbon Neutral!)

21

46,000

*64% = electricity, 36% = natural gas

**Based on total household emissions (House + Vehicles) of 21 Metric Tons (46,000 lbs) GHG Reduction Actions

Action

Household Reduction Potential

- Buy Wind power or Renewable Energy Credits, or install Solar Cells

10,300 lbs CO₂ /yr

- Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled by 5000 miles/yr
(carpool, walk, bike, take the bus)

3000 - 4,500 lbs CO₂ /yr

- Upgrade from 25 mpg vehicle to 35 mpg vehicle

2000 – 4000 lbs CO₂ /yr

- No-Cost Home Improvements*

4000 lbs CO₂ /yr

- Low-Cost Home Improvements*

Additional 4,500 lbs CO₂ /yr

- Medium-Cost Home Improvements*

Additional 6,900 lbs CO₂ /yr

- High-Cost Home Improvements*

Additional 6,800 lbs CO₂ /yr

*Estimates derived from the Rocky Mountain Institute

**Based on total household emissions (House + Vehicles) of 21 Metric Tons (46,000 lbs)

Recent News

The City of Boulder is now offering Free Home Energy Efficiency Upgrades. [Click here to learn more.](#)
Income-qualified Boulder County residents may also qualify for free weatherization services. Call Long's Peak at 303-441-3829 to see if you qualify.

Home energy audits are available for a fee. Visit E-Star for a list of energy raters near you.

Upcoming Events

1/10: Solar Electric Systems 101

1/28: Affordable Home Comfort